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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGUI 000124

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DEPT FOR AF/C  
PARIS FOR RKANEDA  
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SUBJECT: REBELS OF OPPORTUNITY: DDR UNLIKELY TO SOLVE THE ILLS OF THE CAR

REF: A. 09 BANGUI 12, 21, 46, 47, 50, 114  
[1](#)B. 09 NDJAMENA 173

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On June 22, 2009, the Central African Republic's (CAR) newest rebel leader gave an interview to a local newspaper, declaring his intention to adhere to the Demobilization (DDR) process. The former spokesman of Abakar Sabone's Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice (MLCJ), Hassan Ousman, formed a splinter group in late May and is seeking to be recognized by the DDR's verification mechanism. While on the surface this appears good for the CAR, sadly, a second look exposes the downside of the DDR process: that rebel lists are being inflated, and rebel chiefs created, so that donor money can be obtained by a bloated list of recipients. (This is a repeat of the last Central African DDR which saw an original list of under 1,300 ``rebels'' swell to over 7,000.) Though most of the rebel groups, with the notable exception of the Convention for Justice and Peace (CPJP), signed the Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD) of December 2008, the first half of 2009 has seen the rebel movements restart their posturing and violence. This exposes the majority of rebel groups for what they truly are: poorly equipped inhabitants of underdeveloped regions looking for a pay day, and underscores an essential element of AmEmbassy Bangui's reporting - that the DDR process is largely irrelevant to solving the CAR's political crisis. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Ousman founded the National Movement in Salut of the Homeland (MNSP) so that dissidents of the MLCJ who wish to join the DDR movement may do so. The trouble is, the MLCJ and Sabone, since early June, have reentered the peace process thus abrogating the MNSP's raison d'etre. Yet Ousman continues on and promises that if his movement is recognized by the DDR process, he would willing to prove the existence of his forces to the verification mechanism. Meaning, once he gets the assurance that his rebels will be paid to disarm, he will provide evidence that there are rebels. While the MNSP has yet to be recognized by the DDR committee, it seems certain that if it is, it would produce further fraud and waste of the international community's money. The DDR program is set to disarm 9,000 people, yet experts estimate that there have never been more than 4,000 rebels total in country. While this disconnect has been described as acceptable by international observers of the project, the Ousman case proves two disturbing points:  
- The DDR process is being seen by the local population as a pay day. POLOFF received reports in Bozoum that disarmament efforts

by the UNDP, which give cash for guns at a price above market value, is pushing those who turn in their guns to use the profits to purchase more (and better) weapons.

- The DDR process, as it is currently structured, is creating a dangerous precedent that those who take up arms, no matter how lacking in political or military credibility, will eventually be paid to disarm. (Note: we see similar patience in the in the timber industry. People flock to a sawmill for jobs and when the mill closes, people will remain on site for years, hoping that it will reopen - As there is so little economic opportunity; there is no reason to go anywhere else.) The greater danger of the DDR process is that it focuses attention on ``rebels'' while ignoring the over 120,000 internally displaced persons who have no jobs, prospect of payment and very little assistance of any type.

13. (SBU) Low scale scamming of the process by pseudo rebels is unfortunate and exposes the true nature of most of these movements. Stuck in a cycle of poverty due to under development, minimal infrastructure and a lack of governance, many in the region see rebellion, and the disarmament that follows, as a bread winner rather than an ideology. Therefore, the solutions put forward by the IDP did not need to include real political change to be viewed as a ``success''. All it needed to do was promise cash. Thus the root causes remain and the solution offered by the IPD and DDR are fleeting. This is why the Rounga rebellion of the northeast remains the flashpoint in the CAR (09 BANGUI 12, 21, 46, 47, 50, 114; 09 NDJAMENA 173), as its grievances could not be simply bought off. And while DDR is indeed necessary, it is only a longer term and integrated development strategy that can snuff out the embers that spark rebellion in the CAR. As previously reported, Post still believes that the CARG is a long way from coming to this conclusion and do not have the will to properly solve the crisis

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